

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CANBER 06453 280734Z

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ACTION FBO-01

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FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2076

UNCLAS CANBERRA 6453

A/OPR FOR DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY THOMAS AND
A/FBO FOR ACTNG DIRECTOR RALSTON FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: NJAA

TAGS: ABLD, AS

SUBJ: UPGRADING OF CANBERRA REAL ESTATE HOLDINGS
THROUGH EXCHANGE OF PROPERTIES

REF: (A) VISIT TO CANBERRA OF FBO WASHINGTON REPRESENTATIVE
WILLIAM SPICER - NOVEMBER 5 THROUGH 9;
(B) CANBERRA TEL. 6085 TO DEPARTMENT

1. I REGRET THAT PARTICIPATION TOKYO COM MEETING, BILATERAL
ISSUES STEMMING FROM ME CRISIS AND GOVERNOR REAGAN'S VISIT
DELAYED MY PERSONAL REVIEW OF THIS IMPORTANT SUBJECT, WHICH
FOLLOWS UPON MY CONVERSATION WITH EARNEST WARLOW IN
WASHINGTON LAST AUGUST.

2. I HAVE DISCUSSED PROPOSALS DESCRIBED REFTTEL IN
CONSIDERABLE DETAIL WITH MY STAFF AND WITH SPICER DURING
HIS VISIT. I FULLY SUPPORT THE UTILIZATION OF FUNDS
GENERATED BY THE POST THROUGH A PROPERTY EXCHANGE TO ENHANCE
US REALTY POSITION IN CANBERRA, PARTICULARLY IN REGARD TO A
BETTER SITUATED AND MORE SUITABLE DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION
RESIDENCE THAN THAT CURRENTLY IN USE.

3. IT WAS NEVER FBO'S INTENTION TO UTILIZE OUR GOVERNMENT-
OWNED PROPERTY AT 12 MUGGA WAY AS A PERMANENT RESIDENCE FOR
OUR DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION. THE DWELLING LOCATED AT 21 ARKANA
STREET (ON CHANCERY GROUNDS AND CURRENTLY HOUSING THE
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POLITICAL COUNSELOR - NOW TO BE CONVERTED TO A CHANCERY ANNEX)

WAS DESIGNED AND CONSTRUCTED BY FBO AS A DCM RESIDENCE IN THE LATE FORTIES. NUMBER 12 MUGGA WAY, ALTHOUGH LOCATED IN PLEASING AND WELL LANDSCAPED SURROUNDINGS, LACKS THE ACCOMMODATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS TO QUALIFY AS A TRULY ACCEPTABLE DCM RESIDENCE IN MODERN CANBERRA.

4. I BELIEVE THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 8 DALY STREET, IN THE SUBURB OF DEAKIN, AND REFERRED TO BY SPICER IN PARAGRAPHS 7 AND 8 OF HIS CABLE REPORT UNDER REFERENCE, FULLY MEETS OUR CURRENT DCM RESIDENCE REQUIREMENTS. CONSTRUCTED TO MEET THE EXACTING NEEDS OF A MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT AND FORMER MINISTER FOR EDUCATION, IT IS WELL-KNOWN IN GOVERNMENT AND BUSINESS CIRCLES AND IS SITUATED IN AN ACCESSIBLE, WELL POLICED AND DIGNIFIED AREA.

5. IF AUTHORIZED TO PURCHASE THE DALY RESIDENCE, THE EMBASSY WILL MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO HAVE THE CURRENT ASKING PRICE OF A\$115,000 (US\$171,316.00) REDUCED STILL FURTHER, ALLOWING FOR THE MINOR MODIFICATIONS CITED IN THE SPICER REPORT. HOWEVER, EVEN WITHOUT FURTHER REDUCTION, THE HOUSE IN

MY OPINION IS WELL WORTH THE INVESTMENT. I WOULD ESPECIALLY BE PLEASED TO HAVE MY DCM CLOSER AT HAND (ABOUT QUARTER MILE FROM MY RESIDENCE AND CHANCERY).

6. I HAVE ALSO FULLY REVIEWED THE POST'S PRESENTATION AND SPICER'S ANALYSIS OF THE PROPOSED ACQUISITION OF A SOR AT EITHER 48 SHEEHAN OR 10 ANSTEY STREET IN THE OUTER SUBURB OF PEARCE, AND I FIND THAT THE LOCATION OF BOTH THESE HOUSES MAKE THEM EXCELLENT CHOICES (WITH CERTAIN MODIFICATIONS) TO ACCOMMODATE EITHER THE POLITICAL OR ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL COUNSELOR. THE EMBASSY WILL BE REPORTING MORE FULLY ON THIS PARTICULAR ASPECT OF OUR PROPERTY EXCHANGE UNDER SEPARATE COVER.

7. IN SUM, AFTER BEING FULLY BRIEFED ON CANBERRA'S CURRENT HOUSING SITUATION BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND BUSINESS PEOPLE AS WELL AS BY MY OWN STAFF AND BILL SPICER, I AM SATISFIED THAT THE PROPOSALS SUBMITTED BY THE POST AND PRESCRIBED BY SPICER FOR THE ACQUISITION OF A NEW DCMR AND THE SOR ARE UNCLASSIFIED

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SOUND. I SPECIALLY NOTE THAT THE ANTICIPATED OUTLAYS OF FUNDS SUPPORTED BY SPICER, COVERING BOTH (1) PROPOSED PROPERTY ACQUISITIONS AND (2) MODIFICATIONS, DO NOT EXCEED THE MONIES BEING GENERATED LOCALLY THROUGH THE PENDING SALE OF OUR KINGSTON/GRIFFITH HOLDINGS.

8. I HOPE EARLY TELEGRAPHIC AUTHORIZATION WILL BE FORTH-

COMING TO ENABLE OUR ENTERING INTO POSITIVE NEGOTIATION ON
AT LEAST THE 8 DALY STREET RESIDENCE BEFORE THIS PROPERTY
IS LOST TO US ON THE ACTIVE LOCAL REAL ESTATE MARKET.
GREEN

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